

I CLAIM:

1. A method of bone fixation, comprising:

securing anchor portions of a bone plate to different regions of a bone; and

5 deforming the bone plate after the step of securing to adjust a relative disposition of the different regions of the bone.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of deforming includes a step of

adjusting the relative disposition to more closely approximate a natural alignment of the

10 different regions of the bone.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of securing includes securing the

bone plate to a bone having a discontinuity so that the anchor portions are secured to opposing sides of the discontinuity.

15 4. The method of claim 1, the bone being at least two bones, wherein the step of securing includes securing the bone plate to each of the at least two bones.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of securing includes a step of

20 placing bone screws through openings of the anchor portions and into the bone.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of securing includes securing the anchor portions to one of a finger bone, a radius, and a tibia.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of deforming is performed with at least one tool, the method further comprising a step of engaging the bone plate with the at least one tool before the step of deforming.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of engaging includes a step of placing a portion of the at least one tool into a receiver structure of the bone plate.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of placing includes a step of rotating the at least one tool into threaded engagement with the bone plate.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of engaging includes a step of gripping the bone plate with the at least one tool.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of deforming includes deforming the bone plate at a predefined deformation region of the bone plate, and wherein the step of gripping includes gripping the bone plate at spaced sites flanking the predefined deformation region.

12. A method of bone fixation, comprising:

securing anchor portions of a bone plate to bone regions having a relative disposition and disposed on opposing sides of a bone discontinuity; and

deforming a bridge region of the bone plate disposed between the anchor

5 portions to adjust the relative disposition.

13. The method of claim 12, the bone discontinuity being a fracture, wherein the step of securing includes securing the anchor portions to a fractured bone.

10 14. The method of claim 12, the different regions having a natural alignment, wherein the step of deforming includes a step of adjusting the relative disposition to more closely approximate the natural alignment.

15 15. The method of claim 12, the different regions being included in at least two bones, wherein the step of securing includes securing the bone plate to each of the at least two bones.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of securing includes a step of placing bone screws through openings of the anchor portions and into the bone.

20 17. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of securing includes securing the anchor portions to a finger bone.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of deforming is performed with at least one tool, the method further comprising a step of engaging the bone plate with the at least one tool before the step of deforming.

5 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of engaging includes a step of rotating the at least one tool into threaded engagement with the bone plate.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of engaging includes a step of gripping the bone plate with the at least one tool.

10 21. An apparatus for bone fixation, comprising:  
a bone plate including a plurality of anchor portions configured to be secured to different bone regions and a bridge region connecting the anchor portions and being selectively deformable, the bone plate defining a receiver structure; and

15 at least one tool configured to be received by the receiver structure and to apply a deforming torque on the bridge region after the bone plate has been secured to the different bone region, thereby at least one of bending and twisting the bone plate to adjust an angular disposition of the different bone regions to which the anchor portions are secured.

20 22. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the receiver structure includes one or more openings.

23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the receiver structure includes a pair of openings flanking the bridge region, and wherein the at least tool is configured to be received in each of the pair of openings.

5           24. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the one or more openings are one or more threaded openings, and wherein the at least one tool is configured for threaded engagement with the one or more threaded openings.

10           25. The apparatus of claim 21, the bone plate having a length and width that define a plane, the at least one tool defining a long axis, wherein the at least one tool and the receiver structure are configured so that the long axis is disposed at least substantially normal to the plane after the at least one tool is received in the receiver structure of the bone plate.

15           26. The apparatus of claim 21, the bone plate and the at least one tool each having a length, wherein the length of the at least one tool is greater than the length of the bone plate.

20           27. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the at least one tool is configured to be grasped by a hand, and wherein the at least one tool is configured to receive a force exerted on the at least one tool by the hand and to use the force to apply the deforming torque.

28. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the bridge region differs from the anchor portions in at least one characteristic, and wherein the at least one characteristic includes one or more of width, thickness, shape, composition, and crystal structure.

5 29. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein each anchor portion defines one or more openings configured to receive bone screws that secure the anchor portion to one of the bone regions.

30. A bone plate for bone fixation, comprising:

10 a plurality of anchor portions configured to be secured to different regions of a bone; and

a bridge region joining the anchor portions and defining a ridge configured to be spaced from each of the different regions of the bone when the anchor portions are secured to the different regions and apposed thereto, so that the bridge region can be  
15 gripped by at least one tool to apply a torque to at least one of bend and twist the bridge region for adjustment of an angular disposition of the different regions of the bone to which the anchor portions are secured.

31. The device of claim 30, wherein the anchor portions and the bridge region each include an inner and an outer surface, the inner surface of the anchor portions defining a plane, and wherein the outer surface of the bridge region defines an apex and opposing regions, the opposing regions flanking the apex and extending generally  
5 away from the plane.

32. An apparatus for bone fixation, comprising:

means for securing a bone plate to different regions of a bone; and

means for deforming the bone plate after the step of securing to adjust a relative

10 disposition of the different regions of the bone.